

Narrative

1. Community Need

A. Community Description

The target community for the proposed project is Essex County, New Jersey, with priority for the four (4) urban hub municipalities of Orange, East Orange, Irvington and Newark. Essex County contains some of the poorest areas within the State of New Jersey. As presented in the following table, poverty and unemployment indicators show that Essex County as a whole fares substantially worse than the State and the nation. Poverty, income and unemployment within the four (4) urban hub municipalities far outpace even those of the County as a whole. These indicators tend to be consistent from Census to Census thus indicative of entrenched poverty conditions. Within these pockets of poverty, minority populations are predominant. This raises the flag of environmental justice issues as a majority of the Essex County sites on NJDEP's Known Contaminated Sites List are also located within the poor, urban core of Newark and the surrounding urban rim municipalities of Irvington, Orange, and East Orange.

	Newark	East Orange	Orange	Irvington	Essex County	New Jersey	National
Population*	278,750	64,538	30,478	54,268	789,616	8,874,374	314,107,084
Unemployment **	8.8	8.6	7.8	8.5	6.7	5.6	4.4***
Poverty Rate*	29.8	20.8	25.8	22.4	17.2	10.7	15.6
Median Household Income*	34,012	36,978	32,749	38,165	54,499	72,062	53,482
% Minority*	88.9	97.8	97.2	97.6	67.6	42.2	37.2
* 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau							
** 2015 NJ Annual Average Labor Force Estimates by Municipality. NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development							
*** US DOL BLS October, 2017							

The disparity between the four (4) urban hub municipalities and the remainder of the County extends to a greater number of contaminated sites, greater population density and minority population, thus raising serious environmental health and social justice issues. 54% of Essex County's population resides in the 35.16 square mile, four (4) municipality priority area that accounts for only 27% of the total Essex County land area. Per the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, there are 1,423 active sites with confirmed contamination (Active Sites with Confirmed Contamination, NJDEP, January 2017), including Superfund and Brownfield sites throughout the County, however 913, or 64% of those sites are located in the densely populated urban hub of the four priority municipalities, including the Central Valley Brownfield Development Area (BDA) in Orange, the Ironbound area of Newark and the municipalities of Irvington and East Orange. The Central Valley BDA has twenty-two Brownfield and two Superfund sites within an approximate 10-block densely populated area in Orange with documented contamination overlapping into the Township of West Orange. The municipalities of East Orange and Irvington have 80 and 74 Active Sites with Confirmed Contamination (NJ DEP, February 2017) respectively. The four- square mile Ironbound neighborhood contains over 100 brownfield sites, including those along the Passaic River where residents walk, vacant former industrial locations and others beneath residential structures. Superstorm Sandy overwhelmed the Ironbound section of Newark with flood surges from the highly polluted Passaic River and Newark Bay. Numerous low and moderate income households lost wages and income as well as suffered significant property damages. The most affected area was the area commonly referred to as the "island", a distinct neighborhood on the bank of the Passaic that includes heavy industry, brownfield sites, low-income housing projects, and working class homes. The Passaic River itself is a Superfund site, strewn with dioxin and other contaminants. Subsequently, waters that flooded homes in this area brought with them contaminants as they flowed from the river, through industries including a sewage plant, and into homes.

Environmental health issues are prevalent in Essex County and are intensified in the high density, low-income, four- municipality- urban core, residents of which are primarily minority populations. Asthma has long been linked to social justice and environmental health. Essex County's asthma rates, emergency department (ED) visits and hospitalization rates exceed State and national statistics. The disparity in ED visits between the 4

urban hub municipalities (Newark, East Orange, Orange, Irvington) and the western portion of the County is again consistent with that of increased poverty, low income and greater number of contaminated sites.

According to the NJ Department of Health, Asthma Awareness and Education Program, asthma emergency department visits among residents of the four urban municipalities were 150% greater than the State average, while the far western municipalities evidenced rates less than 50% of the State average:

Asthma Rates			
	National*	New Jersey**	Essex County**
Adult	7.4	8.8	10.1
Children	8.6	8.7	12.2
* Center for Disease Control, 2014			
**NJ Department of Health, 2014			

“Asthma ED visit rates also vary quite a bit among municipalities. The following map and table show the asthma ED visit rate by municipality of residence in Essex County (only municipalities with a population of 5,500 or greater are shown). Newark, East Orange, Irvington and the City of Orange had the highest rates (more than 1.5 times the state average) and together accounted for 86 percent of Essex County’s asthma ED visits from 2008-2012 (while only constituting 55 percent of Essex County’s population).(NJ Department of Health, 2014, p.3)”

This proposal addresses employability needs among several populations that are often overlooked entirely or relegated to low-income jobs, thus unable to escape poverty. A majority of these individuals reside in the aforementioned low-income, urban core neighborhoods where contaminated sites are concentrated. The Division and its partners plan to focus EWDJT resources on services for ex-offenders, welfare and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly Food Stamps) recipients, and veterans without skills transferrable to the civilian workforce. As of July, 2016, 3,801 Essex County families received TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) welfare benefits (NJ Dept. of Human Services) An additional 1,947 adults without dependent children received General Assistance and 64,189 received SNAP (NJ DHS,DFD July 2016). In 2011, the Manhattan Institute estimated that over 1,700 ex-offenders return to Essex County from State prison facilities annually. The Essex County Correctional Facility releases approximately 1,400 individuals to Essex County annually (Essex County Correctional Facility, 2017), while halfway houses in Essex County accommodate individuals who participate in work-release and educational programs prior to their release to Essex municipalities. The Essex Vicinage Probation Division supervises approximately 700 County residents on probation each month (Essex County Vicinage, 2017). These statistics do not account for the number of ex-offenders no longer under supervision but where collateral damage negatively affects their employability.

B. Labor Market Demand

The Division surveyed over forty (40) employers, met with employers both individually and in groups, consulted with the Essex County Workforce Development Board, the Essex County One-Stop, the NJ State Employment Services Wagner-Peyser Business Representatives, employers members of the Central Valley Brownfields Development Area (CVBDA) and researched labor market information to determine demand for entry-level positions in site assessment and remediation, pest control, emergency/disaster cleanup, wastewater plant and waste management. We focused on jobs that offered entry-level wages well above the minimum wage, that offered career ladder potential and that projected stability or growth over the next several years. We sought to ascertain employer requirements for these demand occupations, employer interest to hire ex-offenders and to participate in State and federally funded customized training, On-the-Job-Training and bonding programs. The expected population targeted to benefit from this program will be individuals with high school diplomas, no post-secondary education, little or no work experience and with substantial barriers to employment.

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Market Employment Projections, 2014-2024 project stability or growth in a number of environment-related entry-level positions in the Newark Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) which includes all of Essex County and neighboring Union and Morris counties which is a traditional commuting pattern. The occupational titles listed below provide entry wages of over \$12/hour, substantially higher mid-level median wages and afford career ladder advancement opportunities, the majority through ongoing employer-paid training.

Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections 2014-2024, NJLWD, 2017.

Occupation Code (SOC)	Occupation Title	Median Wages	Employment Projection
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	\$38,090	Growing
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$56,890	Growing
51-8031	Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Op	\$54,750	Stable
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	\$49,460	Growing
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipme	\$70,870	Stable
47-2061	Construction Laborers	\$48,370	Growing
37-2021	Pest Control Workers	\$43,690	Stable
19-4091	Environmental Science and Protection Technicians,	\$47,100	Growing

Light Truck, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Driver, Construction Laborers and Operating Engineers SOC (Standard Occupational Classification system, US Bureau of Labor Statistics) classifications encompass job titles applicable to a number of industries, including heavy equipment operators working on contaminated sites, waste management employees, and drivers transporting hazardous and/or remediation material to or from contaminated sites. In February 2017, and again in November 2017, The Division surveyed over 40 local employers in pest control, waste management, site remediation and emergency/disaster services to determine skills and certifications required by employers and approximate openings expected over the next three years. Employers were also surveyed to determine willingness to hire ex-offenders, to participate in the federal bonding program for ex-offenders and interest in hiring any employees through On-the-Job-Training programs funded through the Division's WIOA funds and through the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJLWD) funds. Site remediation heavy equipment contractors and solid waste management employers indicated entry level employees needed a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Clean Harbor and other contaminated site clean-up and remediation employers require entry-level employees without previous construction experience to begin as Construction Laborers with 40-Hour HAZWOPER, Confined Space, 10-Hour OSHA certifications to work on contaminated sites. Pest Control Worker is the entry level position for all integrated pest management careers with initial and subsequent certifications provided through classes offered through the NJ Department of Environmental Protection while employers must certify employee work hours for initial and higher-level certifications.

The Division is a member of the Central Valley Brownfields Development Area (CVBDA) and attends the quarterly meetings to link Brownfields reuse with County-based workforce development programs as discussed in **6. Community and Employer Partnerships, 6.A., 6.B, and 6.C.** The Division is co-located with the Workforce Development Board (WDB, formerly known as the WIB), is the WIOA substate grantee and One-Stop operator, thus maintained a close working relationship over many years. The Division and the WDB jointly chair the monthly One-Stop partner meetings that include all State and County workforce and social service government entities, the Workforce Development Board, training providers and other interested organizations, as discussed in **6. Community and Employer Partnerships, 6.A., 6.B, and 6.C.** The WDB, concurring with the labor market information analysis, has committed to continue to work with the Division in this initiative per the letter of commitment.

2. Training Program Description

Course descriptions for each of the intermediate-level courses listed on the following table may be found in the EPA Transmittal Letter. Using labor market and employer information gathered as discussed in **B. Labor Market Demand**, we have structured the program to offer 40-Hour HAZWOPER within a core of skills and certification training enrolling all participants to develop a more versatile cadre of workers which will enhance their employability (see chart on following page). The aforementioned employer survey and information acquired through the WIOA One-Stop job listings, recommendation of the Workforce Development Board and CVBDA, and federal and State Labor Market Information indicates 1) all individuals on a site are required to have the OSHA 10-Hour card regardless of the job they perform. 2) environmental and clean-up employers indicated that entry level employment applicants with scaffolding and confined space certifications are more versatile, therefore more competitive in the hiring process. 3) employers prefer applicants to have current First Aid/AED certification. Subsequent to the core training, participants may select specialization certifications and training appropriate for three separate tracks, structured based on employer recommendations and labor market

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information, again as discussed in **B. Labor Market Demand**. Based on employer-projected job openings, current local plans for site remediation and at employer suggestion, we have staggered enrollments and occupational tracks to avoid flooding the market with an overabundance of job seekers at any one time and to be consistent with projected employer schedules for work on local contaminated sites. We also expect (and hope) our program graduates obtain career ladder advancement within 6-8 months after their initial job acquisition. Many of the entry-level positions, for example, remediation site Laborer, are required entry slots for all non-degree employees, yet advancement is possible with 6-months experience. Similarly pest control technicians obtain eligibility for advanced certifications through working hours, employer documentation and State-held certification exams that require status as an active employee. Many emergency clean-up firms provide upgrade training for employees after an initial probationary period. Thus, we expect a staggered training schedule will permit placements and new entry level openings for subsequent cycles of participants.

We expect to offer the core sequence of intermediate-level training for all enrollees in 3 cycles of 20 training slots each in months 6, 12 and 18. The scheduled core training phase includes 86 hours of grant-funded occupational skills and 54 hours of soft skills funded through the Division's leveraged resources. This permits us flexibility in each cohort to schedule daytime training consistent with welfare-to-work, unemployment and court-ordered requirements and to accommodate participants with child care schedules and transportation needs, but will include options for weekend and evening training. Additional training will take place after core training and adhere to training school schedules, and include evening and weekend options as schools are open to the public, or as a function of an on-the-job-training prerequisite through the employer. Training curricula (core training and additional training both grant funded and through leveraged funds) will include industry-specific sustainability modules in each course. Moreover, we have required training providers include sustainable practices in delivery of training.

Core training will be provided by Essex County College (ECC), the Ironbound Community Center (ICC) and the Essex County Vocational-Technical School Adult Division (ECVS). ECC is the local public 2-year community college with an extensive history of collaboration with the Division. ICC is a community based agency located in the Ironbound section of Newark which offers an extensive menu of social services and workforce development services to local residents, and has agreed to expand its service area to all of Essex County. ECVS is the public vocational school with several locations throughout Essex County offering adult career education through its evening and weekend and apprenticeship programs.

TRAINING FOR ALL ENROLLEES							
Course Name	Certification	# Hours	Start/End Dates	# Times Offered	Provider	Cost	Per Cent Budget
40-Hour HAZWOPER	OSHA HAZWOPWER	40	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$770 pp 60 enrollees \$46,200 total	23.1%
OSHA 10-Hour Construction Health and Safety	OSHA Card	10	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$275 pp 60 enrollees \$16,500 total	8.25%
Confined Space OSHA Standard	Trainer Certification	8	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$165 pp 60 enrollees \$9,900 total	5.0%
OSHA Supported Scaffolding	OSHA Certification	4	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$145 pp 60 enrollees \$8,700 total	4.35%
OSHA Disaster Training	OSHA Certification	16	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$219 pp 60 enrollees \$13,140 total	6.60%
First Aid CPR AED	Red Cross or AHA	8	See Milestones	3	ECC/ICC ECVS	\$130 pp 60 enrollees \$7,800 total	3.90%

Please note: EPA has indicated the 10-Hour Construction Health and Safety to be allowable under this program, as long as the 40-Hour HAZWOPER is included and the 10-Hour functions as part of a larger curriculum. Many employers require it as a condition for access to a site.

The three (3) tracks of Additional Training as charted below will be funded through leveraged welfare-to-work and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds for which the Division is the substate grantee and administrator for both. Training will be provided by any one of several State-approved training providers based on availability and client selection, thus we are required to indicate To Be Determined (TBD) as the roster of State-approved providers changes.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING- SOLID WASTE, HEAVY EQUIPMENT TRACK							
CDL A & B and Forklift	NJ DMV	190	See Milestones	See Narrative	TBD	\$4,000 pp \$80,000 Leveraged	NA
ADDITIONAL TRAINING-ENVIRONMENTAL TECH, CLEANUP TRACK							
EPA Lead RPB	EPA Certification	8	See Milestones	4	TBD	\$285 pp 20 enrollees \$5,700 total Leveraged Funds	NA
CDL B and OSHA Forklift	OSHA Certification	130	See Milestones	See Narrative	TBD	\$3000 pp 20 enrollees \$60,000 Leveraged Funds	NA
IIRC Mold Remediation Optional	IIRC Certification	130	See Milestones	See Narrative	TBD	\$995 pp 10 enrollees \$9,950 Leveraged Funds	NA
ADDITIONAL TRAINING PEST CONTROL TRACK							
NJ DEP Basic Pesticide Training Course	NJ DEP Certification	40	See Milestones	See Narrative	TBD	OJT 20 enrollees Leveraged Funds	NA
Optional CDL B	NJDMV	120	See Milestones	See Narrative	TBD	\$3,000 pp 20 enrollees \$60,000 Leveraged	NA

Core training tuition alone, as indicated above, accounts for 51.12% of our budget. However, as detailed in **3. Budget**, additional items that will be included in the cost of training and into training contracts increase the total amount to \$137,810, or 68.9% of total budget. Additionally, we are funding several training segments through leveraged funds as indicated and are required by the Federal OMB Super Circular to ascribe Time and Effort reporting to all tasks, thus are required to include staff time as charged to this grant.

3. Budget

EPA FUNDING BUDGET					
Project Funding	Outreach and Recruitment	Instruction Training	Program Management	Placement and Tracking	Total
Personnel	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000
Fringe	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 10,000
Travel	\$ 945	\$ -	\$ 3,300	\$ 945	\$ 5,190
Contractual	\$13,350	\$ 127,865		\$13,350	\$ 154,565
Supplies	\$ 150		\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 300
Other		\$ 9,945	\$ -		\$ 9,945
Total EPA Funds	\$ 29,445	\$ 137,810	\$ 3,300	\$ 29,445	\$ 200,000

- **\$127,865** to contract with the core training providers for the job-specific core training inclusive of all instructional costs: tuition, materials, equipment and space, certifications, exam fees, background, drug and physical exams, TB testing. We have estimated **\$102,240** in core training tuition (per **2. Training Program Description**, above) to ensure that training provider tuition is consistent with cost estimates obtained from several training providers, and that are consistent with their website advertisements and any NJ State requirements. Upon receipt of a grant award, per State of New Jersey procurement rules, we will enter into intergovernmental agreements with ECC and ECVS, and with ICC as required under New Jersey Competitive Contracting rules. In addition to tuition, the Division requires training contractors to provide equipment, clothing, certification fees, instructional material, exam fees, any drug test, physicals and background checks in addition to tuition and fees, and which will be reimbursed by the Division to an estimated total of **\$25,625**, broken out as follows: Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) issued by the Transportation Security Administration Authority (TSA) and required for access near ports, where a great amount of environmental remediation takes place in Northern New Jersey, and which provides an advantage in applications for employment, particularly for those acquiring a CDL license. We estimate 25 TWIC cards at \$125 each (**\$3,125** total), Should we require additional TWIC cards, we will provide leveraged funds for payment; \$125 per person for physical, TB and drug test, (\$125x60=**\$7,500** total), \$125 per person for training books, equipment, tools, materials (\$125x60=**\$7,500** total) and \$125 per person for exam and certification fees (\$125x60=**\$7,500** total). These additional costs are based on the Transportation Security Administration fee for the TWIC card and the costs of the background checks, certification, material and equipment fees the Division currently pays to its training providers, and cost as cited by independent training entities.
- **\$20,000** in Personnel salaries and **\$10,000** in fringe benefits in Division staff costs for outreach to and recruitment of employers, and for job placement, job coaching and client tracking over the three year period. The Division's average salary for an Employment Specialist or Job Developer is approximately \$52,000 annually (\$156,000 each over three (3) years), making grant funds account for 13% of salary per year, consistent with annual caseloads. The 50% fringe rate is that which is currently used by Essex County government units and reflects only the cost of employer-paid fringe that includes employer-mandated contributions for Social Security, Workmen's Compensation, Unemployment Insurance, Disability NJ Family Leave contribution, NJ State Pension employer contribution and healthcare employer contribution. . Because the Division is a governmental agency, the State requires an employer-paid pension share contribution and an employer-paid healthcare contribution thus driving up the per person employer-paid fringe rate.
- **\$13,350** and for outreach and recruitment of participants and **\$13,350** for assistance in participant job placement and tracking which will be provided to our community-based agency (non-profit) partners, who will function as contractors. We feel this is critical as both HANDS and ICC are grassroots organizations with substantial ties to unemployed and low income residents in their local communities, both of which are among our target areas. The amounts allocated for partner agencies' outreach, recruitment and job placement efforts is

consistent with the amounts the Division allocates to local community agencies for the same functions carried out under WIOA and welfare reform programs. Please note, the combined budget for both Division and contractor recruitment, outreach, job placement and ongoing job coaching for three years amounts to \$19,630 annually

- **\$300** in supplies (\$100 per year) over the 36-month grant period including scanner, paper, printer, ink, other consumable supplies, client management software license. Cost of supplies is based on the Essex County formula that annually averages a materials/ supply cost per employee (pro-rated by the per centage of time allocated per funding source) and is applied to all County departments and divisions and is required to be applied to each funding stream.
- **\$5,190** in Travel. Travel includes **\$3,300** (\$1,100 per year x 3 years) for staff to attend the National Job Development All Grantee Conference including Amtrak fare, lodging and per diem food cost consistent with current train fare, conference lodging and Essex County per diem rate. **\$1,890** is budgeted for Division staff mileage reimbursement for outreach/recruitment, job placement, meetings with employers and ongoing job coaching (post placement visits to participant and employer, tracking and follow-up (150 miles per month x .35/mile x 36 months = \$1,890) and mileage reimbursement at .35/mile, the current rate paid all Essex County employees.
- **\$9,945** in Other costs which includes, **\$7,200** for 60 3-zone NJ Transit bus cards and **\$2,745** in NJ Transit 3-zone weekly bus cards and daily scrip where training schedules overlap 1 day to up to 2 weeks into a second month, where cost is less than an additional monthly pass, while enrolled in EPA-funded core training (participant travel for non-EPA funded activity is indicated in 7. **Leveraging**).

4. Program Structure, Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes

A. Outputs and Outcomes

OUTPUTS				
Total Enrolled	# Program Completions	# Placed in Environmental Positions	# Not Placed but Pursuing Further Education	
60	50	37	3	
OUTCOMES				
Residents of targeted areas will begin careers in environmental sector	Contaminated properties will be remediated and redeveloped	Residents will participate in remediation of contaminated properties in their neighborhoods	The program will facilitate sustaining relationships between residents and community redevelopment	Impacted neighborhoods will see a reduced asthma and other health issues that result from lead paint, mold and pest-born disease.

Three (3) grant-funded training cohorts of twenty slots (20) each will be conducted beginning in months 6, 12 and 18 of the grant period as detailed on the milestones chart. Per **Section 2. Training Program Description**, each cohort will include the 86-hour grant-funded core training courses applicable to all participants and subsequently choose of one of the three (3) tracks of leveraged-funded additional training, Pest Control, Solid Waste/Heavy Equipment and Environmental Technician/Cleanup. We have staggered both the core training and specialization tracks to be consistent with the timing of job openings pursuant to employer estimations of the number and types of job openings occurring throughout the grant period. Staggering both core and specialization training avoids oversaturating the marketplace with an overabundance of entry-level job candidates at any one time. We also expect to facilitate employment through On-the-Job-Training opportunities that are funded through WIOA or NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development funds, both of which employer responses have indicated interest. Subsequent to training, placement and the conclusion of any subsidized work period, Division staff will continue to track and follow participants for at least twelve (12) months or through the close of the grant period, whichever occurs **last**, thus affording the potential for ongoing assistance subsequent to the twelve (12) month follow-up period. Based on its extensive experience in workforce development and